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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/902,121	07/10/2001	Thomas J. Cloonan	04807000029	9082

23418 7590 05/17/2005

VEDDER PRICE KAUFMAN & KAMMHOLZ
222 N. LASALLE STREET
CHICAGO, IL 60601

EXAMINER

HARPER, KEVIN C

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2666

DATE MAILED: 05/17/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/902,121	Applicant(s) CLOONAN, THOMAS J.	
	Examiner Kevin C. Harper	Art Unit 2666	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 November 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 13-15 and 19-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 19-22 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 13 and 14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 15 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 13-14 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 4 of copending Application No. 09/620,821 in view of Patel et al. (US 6,865,185).

1. Regarding claims 13-14, claim 4 of the '821 application recites a method for providing a data packet congestion control for a data network buffer circuit comprising determining a packet flow rate for a service flow, determining a priority associated with a data packet, processing a data packet in response to the current data packet flow rate, the data packet priority and the current buffer circuit depth. Claim 4 additionally recites determining a probability of dropping a packet. In removing the step of determining a drop probability, the scope of the claim is merely broadened by eliminating elements and their functions. It has been held that omission of an element and its function is an obvious expedient if the remaining elements perform the same function as before. In *re Karlson*, 136 USPQ 184 (CCPA). Also note *Ex parte Rainu*, 168 USPQ 365 (Bd. App. 1969) (omission of a reference element whose function is not needed would be obvious to one skilled in the art). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to not recite a determining drop probability.

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2. Further, claim 4 of the '821 application does not recite a data rate monitor, a flow limiter and a congestion controller. Patel discloses a data rate monitor (fig. 2, item 32, col. 9, lines 27-29), a flow limiter (fig. 2, item 70; col. 9, lines 56-59) and a congestion controller (fig. 2, item 72; col. 9, line 64 through col. 10, line 4). Each component receives and passes data packets (col. 8, lines 34-37). The flow limiter and the congestion controller have control inputs from the data rate monitor (fig. 2; col. 9, lines 36-40 and 64-66). The flow limiter includes a limiting type control for changing an allowed data packet flow rate (col. 9, lines 5-15; col. 9, line 67 through col. 10, line 4). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to recite a data rate monitor, a flow limiter and a congestion controller in the '821 application in order to provide a physical structure to implement the recited method.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 13-14 would be allowable if the above double patenting rejection is overcome.
4. Claim 15 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.
5. Claims 19-22 are allowed.

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Cloonan et al. (US 2001/0044845) discloses a CTMS for discarding prioritized data

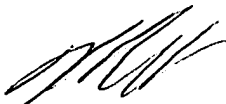
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during congestion (para. 17). Khaunte (US 6,546,017) discloses a CMTS having prioritized data transfers (fig. 2 and 5-6).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kevin Harper whose telephone number is 571-272-3166. The examiner can normally be reached weekdays from 11:30 AM to 7:00 PM ET.

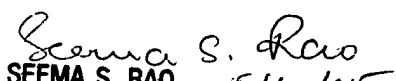
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Seema S. Rao, can be reached at 571-272-3174. The centralized fax number for the Patent Office is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications associated with a customer number is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see portal.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Kevin C. Harper

May 9, 2005


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